



Worship at Home—4 October 2020

Call to Worship

The presence of Divine love touches our living
In the promptings of possibility
In the poetry of pilgrimage
In the gentle moments of compassion
This new day, let us place our hope in God
Let us come before the One who is with us and at work in us

Opening Prayer

Loving God, this Autumn morning, open our hearts and minds to the fullness of life you intend for us
Shape us like clay and fashion us into vessels that you can use to serve your Heavenly Work
We know that we live in a world that is often tough or difficult
High mountains appear above that we think we cannot climb
And low valleys can stretch out ahead that we think we cannot cross
Our hearts are often troubled or afraid.

And so we come this morning to remember that we do not face this life alone
Instead of worrying help us to be people of prayer.

Open our hearts to the healing work of your spirit, the forgiveness of our sins and all the hope and peace
that is available to us.

Forgive us when we have not trusted in you
When we have forgotten that your loving arms are always stretched out to us
Forgive us when we have doubted ourselves
Or when we have forgotten to stretch out our loving arms to others

May our worship today reshape all our worries or concerns, all our distractions and hopes into your
image of life so that here in this hour you can restore to us once again the joy of a quiet heart and a
restful spirit.

Thank you that you are never far from us. Thank you for keeping us in your power as your sons and
daughters. Thank you that you are always ready to welcome us into your presence no matter what our
circumstance. And so may our minds be transformed and focused by the power and the love of Jesus, in
whose name we now pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.
AMEN

The Scripture Reading is taken from: **Philippians 3: 1-14**

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—though I myself have reasons for such confidence.



If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

This is the word of the Lord.



It is with great sadness that we have to intimate the deaths of:

George Forsyth
and
Irene Grant, 21 Nether Currie Crescent

Please pray for the families

The Treasurer would like to thank all those who have donated to Currie Kirk Funds in light of reduced income from our Sunday morning services and no income from our Halls. If you wish to donate, please contact Eddie Pigott on 0131 466 1459, email pigottsef@icloud.com or alternatively Nina in the office.

Also, thank you to those who donated money to the Currie Benevolent Fund—an independent fund to help people and families in distressing circumstances. If you wish to donate please send a cheque to the Currie Benevolent Fund, c/o Kirk Office. Any monies are given out at the discretion of the minister.

Please get in touch with the Kirk Office (451 5141) if you need anything. We have friends willing to listen, shop, walk a dog, fix a garden.

Website: <https://www.curriekirk.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/>

You can also find the sermon on YouTube—search Currie Kirk.

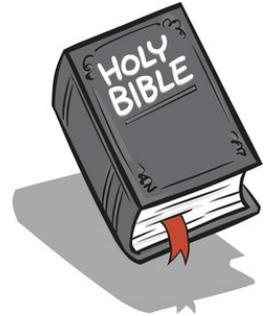
All age talk—Heather



What's the longest journey you've ever been on? For me it was probably when I went to Italy on holiday, but even then, it wasn't really a difficult journey. We sat in a car or on a plane and were taken there by others, there wasn't much we had to do. So I wonder if a better question is actually what's the *hardest* journey you've ever been on? Why did you do it?



There's a story of a girl called Mary Jones. Mary lived in Wales in the year 1800 and she walked a 50 mile round trip in bare feet to buy a book. For 6 years she had saved up every penny she received just so she could buy this book. Would you do that for a book? This book that Mary wanted wasn't any old book, the one she wanted was her very own copy of the Bible, and although she faced many difficulties along the way, she did purchase her very own Bible.



Have you ever wanted something so much that you were willing to do whatever it took? Mary did and it was worth it in the end. What if the thing we wanted so much was our biggest, greatest goal in life? Would you do whatever it took then?

In his letter to the Philippians Paul writes about giving up everything for his life goal—sometimes willingly, other times perhaps not so willingly (Paul did write this letter from prison and I doubt he really wanted to be there!), but always gladly in the end. Why? Because his life goal was to know Jesus and to one day be with Him in heaven, and that is so much better and greater and more wonderful than anything else on the whole earth and so Paul was willing to do whatever it took.

Paul says that everything else compared to being with Jesus is “rubbish”. So, he keeps on going on the journey, forgetting and leaving behind anything that might hold him back so that he can one day reach his destination.

Paul knew that being a Christian and following Jesus wasn't always easy, if we look at Paul's life we see lots of challenging things happened to him—he was put in prison several times, beaten up, shipwrecked, persecuted. Paul wasn't perfect, he didn't get things right all the time. But he knew God had saved him, through Jesus, and his mission was to do his best to follow Jesus until the day he reached heaven, and to tell as many people as he could about Jesus along the way.

The last verses in today's passage Paul says, “...I...forget what is behind me, and do my best to reach what is ahead. So I run straight towards the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.”

Paul describes it as being like a race, but this week I've been thinking that it's not a straight running race where we want to be the fastest and win, and it's not perfectly compared to a marathon either in which we need to pace ourselves and keep going for a long time. To me it seems that sometimes it's like a multi-person three-legged race! We're all tied together, we're working together to reach the same goal, helping one another if we fall down, encouraging each other to keep going, looking together towards the finish line. It's not about first place, it's a team effort. And tied in there with us is Jesus, the ultimate helper.

Our goal should be the same as Paul's – to keep going in the journey, doing our best, looking to Jesus as our example and relying on Him, until one day we reach heaven and we can celebrate and rejoice that we are with God forever. The question is are you willing to do whatever it takes to get there?

Keep going!

Prepare yourself...

Creator God, who calls us to follow,
we are on journeys,
individual journeys and shared journeys,
experiences that are ours alone and ours together.
Guide us on our journey this day and help us to keep our eyes on the goal.
Amen.

These resources are designed to help you explore the Bible as a family together at home while we can't go to church. Be as creative as you want to be and enjoy spending time with each other and with God.



Praise together...



This little light of mine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkblZtghyQ&list=PLMoyWlMAWfN4UMAPomValciC1fgguZ8bF&index=14>

A reminder to let God shine through you everyday!

Question...

What's the hardest thing you've ever done?

Read the Bible...

Today's verses are found in Philippians 3:1-14. You can read them in a Bible or find them here: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=philippians+3%3A1-14&version=NIRV>
You could try reading the verses in different versions to see if it adds to your understanding of the passage.



Talk together...

Paul taught other people what it was like to follow Jesus. He said it was like a long race. Every day we move forward on that journey. We must not worry about the past but keep looking forward to the future. God promises the greatest prize...

Why do you think Paul talks about a prize? What is the prize?

What does running towards a goal make you think about?

What goals are you reaching for? Have you achieved any new goals during lockdown?

How does it feel to see heaven as a "goal"?

What things could you do as a family over the coming weeks to keep focused on Jesus?



Pray together...

Have one person in your family run or walk across the room or round the garden. As they go pray for them by name, thanking God for something unique about them and asking Him to be with them every day.

Play together...

Find 2 mats or pieces of fabric just big enough for you all to stand on at once. Try to move from one side of the room to the other, staying as a team and always standing on one of the mats. When Paul talks to the church in Philippi about running the race with Jesus, he wants them to do it together, looking out for one another and helping each other.



Do something...

Go for a walk or run together this week and talk about what Jesus means to each of you.

Make something...

Give each person a sheet of paper and pens and have each person draw a picture of themselves in the middle of the page. Then design a poster that is all about you. Draw, write, make a collage around the page using words and images about who you are. Once finished, lay them out together and look at each one in turn. Each of us is made uniquely by God, and knowing who we are is important. Why do you think that is?

Holy Trinity Food Bank

Donations of food and money for the Trinity Centre Food Bank can be handed into the office on Tuesday—9.30—12.30.

The list of items that can be donated are:

Tinned soup, cold meat/corned beef, tuna.

Tinned meals: *eg* stew, mince, and meatballs *etc.*

Tinned fruit, rice, beans, UHT milk, coffee, jam, cereal, biscuits.

Toothpaste/shampoo/soap and nappies.

Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal



The Guild continues to meet fortnightly via the wonder of zoom. For the month of October we have 2 speakers arranged. On 6 October at 10am Ronnie Moyes will be talking about "Sir Walter Scott" and on Tuesday

20 October at 2pm Ruth Boreham will be giving a talk on "The History of the Usher Hall".

You do not have to be a member of the Guild to join our zoom meetings. Just send me your e-mail address and I will send you the link. However, you do have to have downloaded the zoom app.

My email address is elf.lamont@blueyonder.co.uk

Meanwhile I hope you are all keeping well and staying safe.

Louise Lamont Guild President

Checklist

Please tick items included and firmly secure this list on your shoebox lid.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS (ALL ITEMS MUST BE NEW):
Include the following items highlighted in the top box.

<input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush and Toothpaste	<input type="checkbox"/> Small Toy for boys and girls such as cars, dolls, balls. Please only include new shop-bought toys.
<input type="checkbox"/> Hat, scarf, gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweets (No chocolate or any other food) 'Best before' date no earlier than 31 March next year. No loose sweets, lollies or undated bags of sweets.
<input type="checkbox"/> Soap	
<input type="checkbox"/> Underwear	

Do not include used or damaged items; war related items such as toy guns or knives or military figures; hand-made or knitted stuffed toys; chocolate or any food other than sweets. Chocolate Eclairs and Chocolate Limes are not allowed; books that are mainly words should also not be included.

Toiletries (NO TALCUM POWDER)	<input type="checkbox"/> Household Candles
<input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo	<input type="checkbox"/> Screwdrivers/Pliers
<input type="checkbox"/> Soap/Shower gel	<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen Utensils
<input type="checkbox"/> Face cloth/ Moist wipes	Stationery
<input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant	<input type="checkbox"/> Pens/Pencils/Sharpener
<input type="checkbox"/> Moisturising Cream	<input type="checkbox"/> Notepads/Colouring books
<input type="checkbox"/> Comb/Brush	<input type="checkbox"/> Rulers/Rubbers
<input type="checkbox"/> Sanitary Products	Clothes and other Items
<input type="checkbox"/> Shaving foam/Razors	(T-shirts/Pyjamas/Jumpers/Shirts) etc
<input type="checkbox"/> Socks/Tights	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> New Make-up	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sewing Equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick the box next to who the box is for
Please specify the age of the girl or boy you have filled this box for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Girl.....yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> Boy.....yrs
<input type="checkbox"/> Teenage.....yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> Teenage.....yrs
<input type="checkbox"/> Woman	<input type="checkbox"/> Man
<input type="checkbox"/> Elderly woman	

Tear along the perforation to detach this panel and secure to the outside of your shoebox

Meditation

Last week I was listening to a biography of Lewis Hamilton on Radio 4. He came from meagre means in Stevenage. His divorced father saved up to enable his son to race karts. From the outset, he was a natural winner. As a youth, he once walked confidently up to the owner of McLaren, shook his hand firmly and declared, "I will race for you some day." His dream was fulfilled and in his first Formula One race against his team-mate Fernando Alonso, he cut him off early to earn his place on the podium. He has since lifted many trophies and is considered by many to be the best Formula One driver of all time.

In the New Testament, Paul often uses the language of a race to describe the priceless value and, at times, the costly demands of Christian life. Paul is always trying to encourage the followers of Jesus, "Run in such a way as to get the prize.!" (*1 Corinthians 9:24*)

Like a coach, he wrote to encourage the early Christian churches; "let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (*Hebrews 12: 2-3*)

In the book of Acts he says, "I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace." (*Acts 20:24*)

In today's Scripture from Philippians, he writes to the people in the church of Philippi. "I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have achieved it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

And so Paul compares Christian discipleship to the training of an athlete who finishes a race or achieves the prize. The more an athlete trains, the fitter he or she becomes. So it is with discipleship. The more we practice a life of service and prayer, the more naturally we are drawn into the life of God. He knows that being a disciple takes commitment, dedication, endurance and perseverance. Is that not true of all good endeavours and goals? Reaching the goal, attaining the prize, finishing the race requires dedication.

Ellie Simmonds, the Paralympic Gold Medalist was interviewed recently. She said when the swimming pools closed in lock-down she has enjoyed a lie-in for years. She paid a huge thank you to her mother who has, for years woken up at 5am and taken her to the pool for training. Her mother has faithfully took her again to training in the evenings after school. Ellie has had to develop new fitness routines in lockdown. All that incredible dedication, discipline and loving support is what she credits for her successes.

Like any sport—swimming or race car driving, golf or whatever . . . being a disciple is something we grow into and learn over time. That is why it is good to share our faith with our children from the time they are young. I sometimes meet parents who say, "I am not going to have my children baptised, I am not going to take them to church . . . I want my child to choose whether to have faith when they are all grown up. Then they can decide if they believe in God on their own."

That logic, doesn't make much sense because teaching children that God loves them is a gift that helps them grow. Imagine a parent who saw sporting potential in their child and said, 'well, I don't want to push them so I will leave them alone. Maybe when they are 18 or 21 they can decide if they like swimming or running—then they can learn.' Faith comes naturally to children and the more they grow to know God in the community of faith the stronger their footing in life.

For Paul, this “race,” this Christian life is not a quick sprint. It is a life-long endeavour. He speaks of a marked out course that is headed somewhere meaningful. To Paul there was nothing more excellent or worth striving for than a life lived in service to God. He frequently refers to the joy he feels following God, even when things are hard. Viscount Samuel wrote in his book, *An Everyday Philosophy*, “Let us count each moment precious, a chance to apprehend some truth, to experience some beauty, to conquer some evil, to relive some suffering, to love and be loved, to achieve something of lasting worth.”

Saint Paul wrote encouraging the Christians who faced struggle, and persecution under Roman rule. He doesn’t want them to give up and so he exhorts them to keep the faith, to continue the race. Just as an athlete might want to drop out of the competition or throw in the towel if the going gets tough. It always seems easier to give up when the going gets hard.

Some people have told me that they started learning a language in lockdown but they gave up after a while. Maybe you began a project you didn’t bother finishing, or maybe you began an exercise regime but you decided doing things in isolation isn’t as fun as doing it with other people. That has certainly been difficult for children having to do on-line lessons at home. In a recent advertisement a chap says, “I decided to stop going to Yoga class so I didn’t have to pay for the class . . . I thought I would just do yoga at home with a book. It’s great he said, when you don’t go to Yoga class! You don’t have to pay for the class, in fact you don’t even have to do the Yoga!

Paul encourages Jesus followers to look to Jesus to find the staying power to run the course. He tells them, “look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith for strength.” Are you tired, or exhausted, wanting to give up trying—Paul says “trust in Jesus for he is with you.”

The letter of James also mentions Perseverance, when we read, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.” (*James 1:1-2*)

In these strange times, perhaps perseverance, endurance, strength and large doses of faith are the very things we need to get through more lock-down and all the repercussions and ramifications of the Pandemic in our lives, in church, our community and world.

Some people like working from home. For others it is not fun at all. If you, like me thrive from being around people and bouncing ideas and listening and sharing . . . isolation in lockdown is not good for us. And so Paul’s encouragement to persevere is nice to hear.

What is important about Paul’s analogy of life as a race, is that it isn’t *winning* that matters. It is finishing the race that counts. Getting to the end, having given a good effort.

At the end of his ministry, when Paul was in Prison, facing certain death, he looked back on his years of service with humility, and in spite of the tears and trials, he faced imminent death with joy because he knows he has fulfilled the ministry to which Jesus called him. He writes to dear friends, knowing he may certainly never see them again; “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (*2 Timothy 4:7*)

Since coming to Currie I have been privileged to take a good number of funerals for so many people and of those people we can say that they “fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith.” This week we may say it of Irene Grant and Jean Perry—but it is true of so many others who have gone before us to heavenly rest and eternal life in God’s love.

I am often inspired by the lives people have lived—and even by the difficulties many have overcome. As we get through this next chapter of 2020, as we continue to run the race set before us, whatever the obstacles or adversities in our way, whether we are together or apart, let’s hold onto Paul’s moving words to inspire and encourage us to persevere so that we, too, may one day finish the course with joy.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

God of the many and the few, God of the strong and the weak
God of saints and sinners alike
We give thanks that you are patient with us
Even when we follow the crowd instead of following You
Even when we are distracted or drawn away . . . here and now
Help us to renew our trust in you
To wait for you in our lives and to pray for your work in the world.

We pray for your churches
Throughout the earth
We pray you bless them with confidence and creativity
To draw people to know your love
And to see the goodness that shines from the life and love of Jesus Christ
May we reveal to your children the things of your Kingdom.
We also pray that your angels guard and keep all children safe from harm.

God of all comfort, we ask your love would
Extend to all who may be desolate and afflicted today
May the prayers of the oppressed be heard and answered.
Attend the prayers of those living in the danger of war zones
Who are refugees or hungry or homeless
Assist those who need human help we pray that human help would come
Be near also to those who have troubles for which there seems to be no human help
Sustain and strengthen them too.

We pray for your love to surround
All those who are sick or ill in body, mind or spirit
We pray that your vision for wholeness and healing
Would find them and bring them peace
That your grace would abound in each situation
We pray too for all who care for the sick and the hungry
For those who give their time and skill
For those who stay awake while others sleep
Bless them in their labour

Help each of us to stay near to you
In our hours of work, hours of leisure
In our relationships, in our joys and sorrows.
Help us in everything by prayer and supplication
To make our requests known to you
Teach us to profit by spiritual discipline and enable us
To be strengthened to risk ourselves in the service of Christ.

We commend to your care all our dear friends and loved ones
Those near and those far
Watch over them

We thank you for the redeeming love which you have given us in Jesus Christ

Amen